

Saint Louis Audubon

BULLETIN

January, 1969

Vol. 37, No. 2

COME FLY WITH US

MRS. WARREN B. LAMMERT, *Convention Chairman*

A spring migration at the Gateway Arch — that's the picture drawn by Guy Coheleach in the current National Audubon Magazine to announce to all the country that the forthcoming National Audubon convention will be held in St. Louis April 25th to 29th!

The announcement also includes data of the two field trips to be conducted Sunday, April 27, and Tuesday the 29th, and gives information about the pre- and post-convention trips, one to the Ozarks with a float on the Current River, and one to Squaw Creek National Refuge, the prairie chicken booming grounds, and Mark Twain's Hannibal country.

The program of the daytime meetings, and the evening entertainments and nature films, will be published in a later issue.

But meanwhile we URGE all St. Louis Auduboners and their friends to register NOW for National's 64th convention, the first ever held in the mid-west, the first ever held in the spring. The theme — Man and Nature in Mid-America. The location — the Sheraton-Jefferson Hotel. Registration cost — \$5.00. Registration form — in the current Audubon Magazine, or write to the National Audubon Society, 1130 Fifth Avenue, New York City 10028.

We St. Louisans have a reputation for hospitality. We have been honored by having the convention come to St. Louis. Let's all get on the band wagon and register now! Applications are already coming in from coast to coast. WE have a great treat ahead of us!

WINTER WILDLIFE FILMS

**JANUARY 21, 1969, Tuesday
Third Baptist Church at 8:15**

Walter H. Berlet will present his film, "Hawaii — Paradise of the Pacific". A naturalist's treasure hunt through the islands, including stops at the Grand Canyon of Waimea, Napoli Coast, Volcanoes National Park, and a horseback trip across Haleakala Crater.

**FEBRUARY 7, Friday
Clayton High School at 8:15**

Wally Rentsch presents his highly informative film, "The Water's Edge". The problem of water conservation, the contrast between polluted waters, and untouched natural areas, as well as carefully managed sanctuaries where man has accepted the challenge of living in harmony with his environment. Over 60 species of plant and animal life photographed.

**MARCH 7, Friday
Third Baptist Church at 8:15**

Eben McMillan returns to St. Louis with his newest nature film, "Outback Australia". Absorbing pictures of the vast and mysterious regions of Australia, from kangaroos and koala bears to Jabiru storks, honeyeaters and lorikeets.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

On behalf of the Board of the St. Louis Audubon Society I wish to express our hope that the Society's members, and all friends of conservation and wildlife, will participate in the National Audubon convention being held at the Sheraton Jefferson Hotel in St. Louis April 25 to 29.

Many of our members have had the good fortune to attend former conventions — at Tucson, Sacramento, Miami, Boston, Corpus Christi and Atlantic City. Now the National Society is convening here. Those too busy to go to all the meetings and panel discussions, or on the field trips, could attend the annual banquet, Tuesday evening, April 29, and have an opportunity then to hear and meet members of our distinguished staff and National Board.

But we hope many of you can arrange to enjoy the entire interesting program.

Earl Hath, President

ILLINOIS SIDE OF RIVER CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Pere Marquette State Park, Illinois. 39°00' N, 90°36' W (all points within a 15-mile diameter circle, center Meppen, to include parts of Mark Twain National Wildlife Refuge; upland woods and fields 30%, bottomlands 70%). December 21, 1968; 6 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Overcast; temperature 32° to 34°; wind SW, 5-8 m.p.h.; no snow cover, lakes 75% frozen, rivers open.

52 observers in 11 parties. Total party-hours, 75 (35½ on foot, 37 by car, 2½ by air); total party-miles, 610 (22 on foot, 393 by car, 195 by air).

Great Blue Heron, 7; Whistling Swan, 2; Canada Goose, 430; Snow Goose, 1500; Blue Goose, 7000; Mallard, 34,329; Black Duck, 587; Gadwall, 19; Pintail, 160; American Widgeon, 29; Shoveler, 8; Wood Duck, 13; Ring-necked Duck, 82; Canvasback, 20; Lesser Scaup, 200; Common Goldeneye, 300; Bufflehead, 6; Ruddy Duck, 3; Hooded Merganser, 4; Common Merganser, 1000; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 39; Harlan's Hawk, 2; Redshouldered Hawk, 1; Rough-legged Hawk, 1; Bald Eagle, 198 (74a, 124 i); Marsh Hawk, 9; Sparrow Hawk, 26; Bobwhite, 77; American Coot, 11; Killdeer, 3; Common Snipe, 2 Shorebird sp., 1; Herring Gull, 31; Ring-billed Gull, 700; Mourning Dove, 39; Great Horned Owl, 2; Barred Owl, 1; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 95; Pileated Woodpecker, 13; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 137; Red-headed Woodpecker, 124; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 9; Hairy Woodpecker, 15; Downy Woodpecker, 171; Horned Lark, 7; Blue Jay, 280; Common Crow, 929; Black-capped Chickadee, 299; Tufted Titmouse, 195; White-breasted Nuthatch, 39; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Brown Creeper, 14; Carolina Wren, 57; Short-billed Marsh Wren, 1; Mockingbird, 17; Brown Thrasher, 1; Robin, 598; Hermit Thrush, 1; Eastern Bluebird, 20; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 6; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 5; Cedar Waxwing, 48; Loggerhead Shrike, 5; Starling, 1338; Myrtle Warbler, 1; House Sparrow, 1663; European Tree Sparrow, 103; Eastern Meadowlark, 66; Red-winged Blackbird, 5050; Rusty Blackbird, 6; Common Grackle, 8878; Brown-headed Cowbird, 70; Cardinal, 764; Purple Finch, 8; Pine Siskin, 65; American Goldfinch, 242; Rufous-sided Towhee, 1; Slate-colored Junco, 1231; Tree Sparrow, 326; Field Sparrow, 77; White-crowned Sparrow, 30; White-throated Sparrow, 12; Fox Sparrow, 5; Swamp Sparrow, 116; Song-Sparrow, 198.

Total: 85 species; about 70,181 individuals.

Participants: Doug Adams, Dick Anderson, Mitzi Anderson, Kathryn Arhos, Dave Beach, George Billy, Rod Bogie, Alberta Bolinger, Andy Bromet, Bill Brush, Jack Buese, Sandra Buntin, Henry Colteryah, Betty Croxford, Dennis Croxford, Kenneth Croxford, Patricia Crull, Joann Current, William Dunning, Steve Gast, Dorothy Gore, Jack Groppel, Connie Hath, Earl Hath, Kemp Hutchinson, Jim Jackson, Frank Kime, Henrietta Lammert, Warren Lammert, Bertha Massey, Joel Massey, John McCall, Ed Murray, Lorli Nelson, Moreno Richardson, Richard Rowlette, Gene Sands, Lynn Schaefer, Allen Schroeder, Mimi Schroeder, Marj Self, Fred Springer, Kay Stewart, Jerry Strickling, Nancy Strickling, John Surgeon, Robert Thomas, Dick Vasse, Sally Vasse (compiler — Brussels, Ill. 62013), Mary Wiese, Lamound Wilson, George Winter.



Observations

ST. LOUIS AREA 1968 BIRDING IN REVIEW

J. EARL COMFORT

The 1968 birding within a 50 mile radius of St. Louis was exciting to the many birders, who probably set a record for the number of local observers though it was not a record for species listed. The composite total of 288 species for 1968 is an impressive one and one of our highest for a year's bird watching. There were 6 species that stood out on the extremely rare list with many rarities worthy of mention. Top bird was a Louisiana heron found in Illinois down levee from the Jefferson Barracks Bridge by Dick Anderson on June 2nd and listed later by Chris and Kathryn Arhos and later in the month in the vicinity by Ernie and Kay Mueller. It was our only first listing for the area. The other five were seen at least twice before in the region. A brant appeared down levee on May 4th and was promptly identified by Jim Ruschill. It lingered several days to make several other birders happy. Number 3 was a great black-backed gull identified at the Alton Dam by Sally Vasse for the 9 observers of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society mid-week group on February 15th. It was seen there on the following day by several others. A laughing gull down levee on June 27th was checked by the WGNSS mid-week group after Kathryn Arhos called it to their attention. Number 5 distinction goes to the Iceland gulls found in February. On the 15th of February the same 9 observers that thrilled to the black-backed studied at length an Iceland at Portage Des Sioux to a satisfactory identification. Two more Icelands were found at the Dam, one an adult, the other a first year bird. It was actually a toss up between the 5th and 6th rarities. An immature black-legged kittiwake was identified on February 8th by Kathryn Arhos for the WGNSS group. This bird lingered several weeks and became an easy listing for many. Some other rarities of 1968 in the AOU listing order were common loon, horned grebe, white pelican, cattle egret, whistling swan, white-fronted goose, greater scaup, oldsquaw and white-winged scoter ducks, black vulture, Miss. kite, goshawk, Harlan's hawk, golden eagle, Peregrine falcon, pigeon hawk, purple gallinule, piping plover, ruddy turnstone, willet, knot, buff-breasted sandpiper, Hudsonian godwit, sanderling, northern phalarope, glaucous gull, barn owl, snowy owl, red-shafted flicker, scissor-tailed flycatcher, fish crow, red-breasted nuthatch, Bohemian waxwing, hooded warbler, western tanager, evening grosbeak, common redpoll and Smith's longspur.

A list of the area observers with 200 or more 1968 species within a radius of 50 miles will appear in a later BULLETIN. The annual St. Louis Audubon Society Christmas bird count was made under very adverse conditions with ice-covered roads and gusts of winds up to 35 miles per hour. (See the Orchard Farm, Mo., count.)

I AM A GRANDFATHER OF A BIRD WATCHER

DUDLEY FRENCH

Never did I dream that a grandson would detour me to a brand new interest. It all happened about twelve years ago when he was ten. We were sitting on the porch of our summer house in Massachusetts where the branches of a choke cherry tree were our most immediate view. There was an audible fluttering above us. My companion began identifying warblers!

My inquiry brought forth the news that for several years he had been going on bird walks with a "pro" who took a small group of boys. My grandson was so pat and glib with his knowledge that I began a little research on my own. Up to that moment my life list consisted of a crow and a bluejay. My main purpose was to check the reliability of this amazingly rapid recognition. Could it be that bird watchers, from ten years old on, tended to develop a slight deviation from factual truth?

The intervening years have been arduous. Our first walk together was to a nearby cemetery. I find birds don't mind spooks, but this place was not on level ground, so our first walk turned out to be our last. I insisted on one ground rule. The birds must come to me, while I remained comfortably seated. So from then we drove to our hunting grounds and I rarely left the car. This was not entirely satisfactory, however, as my reliability as a grandfather was in doubt.

One morning we started out for a well known bird sanctuary, well known, that is, to everyone but me. I had a general idea — somewhere in New England! It took almost two hours to reach our destination with a number of pauses to find out where we were. At this point our credibility gap was at its widest even though I had acquired a second hand Peterson guide to impress by companion. We finally found the sanctuary. It was so hot and humid not even a grasshopper was hopping. We saw one weary robin that never even turned his head as we passed by. After I dropped the boy off at home at the end of the day I found a card on the back seat that said, "One grandfather for sale". That told the story.

Finally there was a turn for the better. We found another porch with a wider range of vision, right on the shore where the parade was daily and endless. A delicate humming bird at work on a nearby flowering bush and a big Blackback gull patrolling the distant clam flats were part of the picture. The other actors were cavorting terns, raucous herring gulls, yellow legs fishing in the shallow tides, a little green heron sitting still for ages before he gobbled a minnow. The gap between grandfather and birdwatcher was closing!

Recently one of my friends asked my now grown grandson about my constant use of binoculars. She said everytime she passed our porch I was peering through the glasses. She wanted to know what could be so absorbing. He replied, "He's just looking at girls. What else?" You can tell from this we have found a common interest and I have acquired a fascinating hobby. And I don't mean girls!

ST. LOUIS ANNUAL AUDUBON SOCIETY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

J. EARL COMFORT

Orchard Farm, Mo. $38^{\circ}52' N$, $90^{\circ}26' W$ (all points within a 15 mile diameter circle, center Orchard Farm; along Missouri side of Mississippi River; bottomlands and sloughs 10%, tilled and farrow fields 90%). — December 28; 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Cloudy; temperature 24 to 27; wind NNW, 25-35 m.p.h. ground frozen and snow-covered, river open, lakes frozen. Eight observers in 1 party. Total party hours $8\frac{1}{2}$ (1 on foot, $7\frac{1}{2}$ by car) total party-miles 53 ($\frac{1}{2}$ on foot, $52\frac{1}{2}$ by car).

Canada goose, 1; mallard, 7322; black duck, 11; American widgeon, 4; canvasback, 45; lesser scaup, 978; common goldeneye, 214; red-tailed hawk, 5; bald eagle, 1; marsh hawk, 2; sparrow hawk, 2; herring gull, 3 ring-billed gull, 12; mourning dove, 12; yellow-shafted flicker, 8; red-bellied woodpecker, 15; red-headed woodpecker, 4; downy woodpecker, 2; horned lark, 631; blue jay, 32; common crow, 86; black-capped chickadee, 15; white-breasted nuthatch, 2; Carolina wren, 1; mockingbird, 5; robin, 16; starling, 312; house sparrow, 491; European tree sparrow, 26; eastern meadowlark, 42; red-winged blackbird, 127; common grackle, 5; cardinal, 23; goldfinch, 1; slate-colored junco, 61; tree sparrow, 122; field sparrow, 1; song sparrow, 11; Lapland longspur, 47.

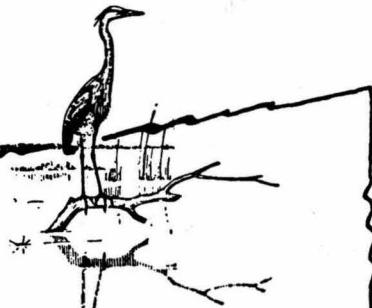
Total, 39 species (1 additional race); about 10,698 individuals.

Timmy Barksdale, Alberta Bolinger, Andy Bromet, Earl Comfort (compiler), Connie Hath, Earl Hath, Joel Massie, Dorothea Vogel. (St. Louis Audubon Society.)

EAGLE COUNT

The fourth annual Eagle Count on the Mississippi River will be held on Saturday, February 15th starting at 8:30 A.M. at Clarksville, Mo. Meeting place will be at Duvall's Motel where hot coffee and doughnuts will be served. Take Highway 70 to 79 then north to Clarksville. Mr. McCune Dudley and Mr. Gus Artus of Louisiana, Mo., will be in charge. The Warren Lammerts will have "Open House" at their farm beginning at noon and all members are welcome.

Call Kathryn Arhos at ME 1-3090 if you plan to go.



Don't miss the thrills of a

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5079 Waterman Ave.
St. Louis, Mo. 63108
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Earl H. Hath..... President
2109 Briargate Lane, St. Louis, Mo. 63122
Miss Alberta Bolinger..... Executive Secretary

BULLETIN COMMITTEE

Mrs. Warren B. Lammert **Mrs. Hiram Norcross, Jr.**
G. Alex Hope, Chairman

**St. Louis Audubon Society
5079 Waterman Ave.
St. Louis, Mo. 63108**

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